

# THE LITERARY CHRONICLE

## And Weekly Review;

Forming an Analysis and General Repository of Literature, Philosophy, Science, Arts, History, the Drama, Morals, Manners, and Amusements.

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### Review of New Books.

*Tales of the Hall.* By the Rev. George Crabbe, L.L.B.  
In two volumes. 8vo. pp. 679. London, 1819.

MR. CRABBE is a veteran poet of no mean celebrity; indeed he has been styled the father, not of any particular school of poetry, but of the English poets, a title which he merits from other causes than what age alone could give him. It is now nearly forty years since Mr. Crabbe first ascended the 'sacred hill,' and published his poems of the 'Village,' the 'Library,' and the 'Newspaper,' all of which were then read, admired, and applauded, by the best judges of poetical composition, and have subsequently acquired a high degree of popularity. Feeling, energy, originality, minute observation, an unrivalled vividness, and not unfrequently a certain painful truth of painting, are the characteristics of Mr. Crabbe's styles.

In the plan, and still more in the versification of some of his poems, Mr. Crabbe resembles Goldsmith more than any other writer. These observations on the author's former works, will strictly apply to the 'Tales of the Hall,' which contain sketches of numerous characters; some are pathetic, some humorous, all show a lively conception and extensive knowledge of character, and none are void of interest: the student of life and manners can scarcely fail to be interested by the strong and faithful delineations here offered to his view; and the pallid seeker after novelty will prefer their stimulant originality to the insipid elegance of many of our modern bards. Mr. Crabbe, although by no means an imitator, has not had the vanity to adopt any peculiar style or manner; he has no peculiar notion to defend, no poetical heterodoxy to support, nor theory of any kind to vindicate or oppose; his is probably the most common measure in our language, and whatever may be its advantages or defects, they are too well known to require from me a description of the one, or an apology for the other.

The early part of this series contains an account of the two brothers, George and Richard, at whose hall the tales are related, after many years of separation, in which a number of interesting narratives are unfolded. George, the elder, is of a serious discriminating turn of mind, and he becomes religious. Richard differs from his brother in some respects, his mind is more vigorous, open, and susceptible, but he is less religious. From these objects the author turns to scenes in humble life, sketched with the felicity of a master.

The name of 'Tales,' though conveying no definite meaning, has long been a favourite title with authors. We have had 'Tales of the Genii,'—'Tales of the Castle,'—'Tales of Real Life,'—'Tales of My Landlord,' and we have now, 'Tales of the Hall,' in twenty-two books; Vol. I.

comprising, accurate and well-contrasted pictures of numerous persons residing near the hall of a country squire, all showing a lively conception and extensive knowledge of character; the tales are generally related by some visitor at the hall, or by one of the brothers who reside in the hall: they are not very remarkable for the interest of the story; but, as containing sketches of individual character, and faithful delineations of manners, they are entitled to much praise. 'The Old Bachelor' may be mentioned in particular, as a confirmation of our remarks; for although the story, in itself, is one of little interest, yet a deep insight into the human mind and character is displayed throughout the whole. The reflections of an old bachelor, on the eve of marriage, are well expressed:—

"Still, when the day that soon would come was named,  
I felt a cold fit, and was half ashamed;  
But we too far proceeded to revoke,  
And had been much too serious for a joke:  
I shook away the fear that man annoys,  
And thought a little of the girls and boys.

A week remain'd,—for seven succeeding days  
Nor man nor woman might control my ways;  
For seven dear nights I might to rest retire  
At my own time, and none the cause require:  
For seven blest days I might go in and out,  
And none demand, 'Sir, what are you about?'  
For one whole week I might at will discourse  
On any subject, with a freeman's force.

Thus while I thought, I utter'd, as men sing  
In under-voice, reciting 'with this ring,'  
'That when the hour should come, I might not dread  
'These, or the words that follow'd, 'I thee wed.'"

'The tale of Ellen strikes us as one of the best in these volumes, and, as it is short, we give it entire;—

'She was an only daughter, one whose sire  
Loved not that girls to knowledge should aspire;  
But he had sons, and Ellen quickly caught  
Whatever they were by their masters taught;  
This, when the father saw—"It is the turn  
Of her strange mind," said he, "but let her learn;  
'Tis almost pity with that shape and face—  
But is a fashion, and brings no disgrace;  
Women of old wrote verse, or for the stage  
Brought forth their works! they now are reasoners sage,  
And with severe pursuits dare grapple and engage.  
If such her mind, I shall in vain oppose;  
If not, her labours of themselves will close."

Ellen, 'twas found, had skill without pretence,  
And silenced envy by her meek good sense;  
That Ellen learnt, her various knowledge proved;  
Soft words and tender looks, that Ellen loved;  
For he who taught her brothers, found in her  
A constant, ready, eager auditor;  
This he perceived, nor could his joy disguise,  
It tuned his voice, it sparkled in his eyes.



Not very young, nor very handsome he,  
But very fit an Abeldar to be;  
His manner and his meekness hush'd alarm  
In all but Ellen—Ellen felt the charm;  
Her's was fond "filial love," she found delight  
To have her mind's dear father in her sight;  
But soon the borrow'd notion she resign'd!  
He was no father—even to the mind.

But Ellen had her comforts—"He will speak,"  
She said, "for he beholds me fond and weak;  
Fond, and he therefore may securely plead,—  
Weak, I have therefore of his firmness need;  
With whom my father will his Ellen trust,  
Because he knows him to be kind and just."

Alas! too well the conscious lover knew  
The parent's mind, and well the daughter's too;  
He felt of duty the imperious call,  
Beheld his danger, and must fly or fall.  
What would the parent, what his pupils think?  
Oh! he was standing on perdition's brink:  
In his dilemma flight alone remain'd,  
And could he fly whose very soul was chain'd?  
He knew she loved; she tried not to conceal  
A hope she thought that virtue's self might feel.  
Ever of her and her frank heart afraid,  
Doubting himself, he sought, in absence, aid,  
And had resolved on flight, but still the act delay'd;  
At last so high his apprehension rose,  
That he would both his love and labour close.

"While undiscovered my fear each instant grows,  
And I lament the guilt that no one knows,  
Success undoes me, and the view that cheers  
All other men, all dark to me appears!"

Thus as he thought, his Ellen at his side,  
Her soothing softness to his grief applied;  
With like effect as water cast on flame,  
For he more heated and confused became,  
And broke in sorrow from the wondering maid,  
Who was at once offended and afraid;  
Yet "do not go!" she cried, and was awhile obey'd.

"Art thou then ill, dear friend!" she ask'd, and took  
His passive hand—"How very pale thy look!  
And thou art cold, and tremblest—pray thee tell  
Thy friend, thy Ellen, is her master well?  
And let her with her loving care attend  
To all that vexes and disturbs her friend."

"Nay, my dear lady! we have all our cares,  
And I am troubled with my poor affairs:  
Thou canst not aid me, Ellen; could it be  
And might it, doubtless, I would fly to thee;  
But we have sundry duties, and must all,  
Hard as it may be, go where duties call—  
Suppose the trial were this instant thine,  
Couldst thou the happiest of thy views resign  
At duty's strong command?"—"If thou wert by,"  
Said the unconscious maiden, "I would try!"—  
And as she sigh'd she heard the soft responsive sigh.

And then assuming steadiness, "Adieu!"  
He cried, and from the grieving Ellen flew;  
And to her father with a bleeding heart  
He went, his grief and purpose to impart;  
Told of his health, and did in part confess  
That he should love the noble maiden less.

The parent's pride to sudden rage gave way—  
"And the girl loves! that plainly you would say—  
And you with honour, in your pride, retire!—  
Sir, I your prudence envy and admire."  
But here the father saw the rising frown,  
And quickly let his lofty spirit down.

"Forgive a parent!—I may well excuse  
A girl who could perceive such worth and choose  
To make it her's; we must not look to meet  
All we might wish;—is age itself discreet?  
Where conquest may not be, 'tis prudence to retreat."  
Then, with the kindness worldly minds assume,  
He praised the self-pronounced and rigorous doom;  
He wonder'd not that one so young should love,  
And much he wish'd he could the choice approve;  
Much he lamented such a mind to lose,  
And begg'd to learn if he could aid his views,  
If such were form'd—then closed the short account,  
And to a shilling paid the full amount.

So Cecil left the mansion, and so flew  
To foreign shores, without an interview;  
He must not say, I love—he could not say, adieu!

Long was he absent; as a guide to youth,  
With grief contending and in search of truth,  
In courting peace, and trying to forget  
What was so deeply interesting yet.

A friend in England gave him all the news,  
A sad indulgence that he would not lose;  
He told how Ellen suffer'd, how they sent  
The maid from home in sullen discontent,  
With some relation on the Lakes to live,  
In all the sorrow such retirements give;  
And there she roved among the rocks, and took  
Moss from the stone, and pebbles from the brook;  
Gazed on the flies that settled on the flowers,  
And so consumed her melancholy hours.

Again he wrote—the father then was dead,  
And Ellen to her native village fled,  
With native feeling—there she opened her door,  
Her heart, her purse, and comforted the poor,  
The sick, the sad,—and there she pass'd her days,  
Deserving much, but never seeking praise;  
Her task to guide herself, her joy the fallen to raise;  
Nor would she nicely faults and merits weigh,  
But lov'd the impulse of her soul to obey;  
The prayers of all she heard, their sufferings view'd,  
Nor turn'd from any, save when love pursued;  
For though to love disposed, to kindness prone,  
She thought of Cecil, and she lived alone.

Thus heard the lover of the life she past  
Till his return,—and he return'd at last;  
For he had saved, and was a richer man  
Than when to teach and study he began;  
Something his father left, and he could fly  
To the loved country where he wish'd to die.

"And now," he said, "this maid with gentle mind  
May I not hope to meet, as good, as kind,  
As in the days when first her friend she knew  
And then could trust—and he indeed is true?  
She knew my motives, and she must approve  
The man who dared to sacrifice his love  
And fondest hopes to virtue: virtuous she,  
Nor can resent that sacrifice in me."

He reason'd thus, but fear'd, and sought the friend  
In his own country, where his doubts must end;  
They then together to her dwelling came,  
And by a servant sent her lover's name,  
A modest youth, whom she before had known,  
His favourite then, and doubtless then her own.

They in the carriage heard the servants speak  
At Ellen's door—"A maid so heavenly meek,  
Who would all pain extinguish! Yet will she  
Pronounce my doom, I feel the certainty!"  
"Courage!" the friend exclaim'd, "the lover's fear  
Grows without ground;" but Cecil would not hear:



He seem'd some dreadful object to explore,  
And fix'd his fearful eye upon the door,  
Intensely longing for reply—the thing  
That must to him his future fortune bring;  
And now it brought! like Death's cold hand it came—  
"The lady was a stranger to the name!"

Backward the lover in the carriage fell,  
Weak, but not fainting—"All," said he, "is well!  
Return with me—I have no more to seek!"  
And this was all the woeful man would speak.

Quickly he settled all his worldly views,  
And sail'd from home, his fiercer pains to lose,  
And nurse the milder—now with labour less  
He might his solitary world possess,  
And taste the bitter-sweet of love in idleness.  
Greece was the land he chose; a mind decay'd  
And ruined there, through glorious ruin stray'd;  
There read, and walk'd, and mused,—there lov'd, and  
wept, and pray'd;

Nor would he write, nor suffer hope to live,  
But gave to study all his mind could give;  
Till, with the dead conversing, he began  
To lose the habits of a living man,  
Save that he saw some wretched, them he tried  
To soothe,—some doubtful, them he strove to guide;  
Nor did he lose the mind's ennobling joy  
Of that new state that death must not destroy;  
What Time had done we know not,—Death was night  
To his first hopes the lover gave a sigh,  
But hopes more new and strong confirm'd his wish to die.

Meantime poor Ellen in her cottage thought  
"That he would seek her—sure she should be sought;  
She did not mean—It was an evil hour,  
Her thoughts were guardless, and beyond her power;  
And for one speech, and that in rashness made!  
Have I no friend to soothe him and persuade?  
He must not leave me—he again will come,  
And we shall have one hope, one heart, one home!"

But when she heard that he on foreign ground  
Sought his lost peace, her's never more was found;  
But still she felt a varying hope that Love  
Would all these slight impediments remove;—  
"Has he no friend to tell him that our pride  
Resents a moment and is satisfied?  
Soon as the hasty sacrifice is made,  
A look will soothe us, and a tear persuade;  
Have I no friend to say, 'return again,  
Reveal your wishes, and relieve her pain?'"

With suffering mind the maid her prospects view'd,  
That hourly varied with the varying mood;  
As past the day, the week, the month, the year,  
The faint hope sicken'd, and gave place to fear.

No Cecil came!—"Come, peevish and unjust!"  
Sad Ellen cried, "why cherish this disgust?  
Thy Ellen's voice could charm thee once, but thou  
Canst nothing see or hear of Ellen now!"

Yes! she was right; the grave on him was closed,  
And there the lover and the friend reposed.  
The news soon reached her, and she then replied,  
In his own manner—"I am satisfied!"

To her a lover's legacy is paid,  
The darling wealth of the devoted maid;  
From this her best and favourite books she buys,  
From this are doled the favourite charities;  
And when a tale or face affects her heart,  
This is the fund that must relief impart.

Such have the ten last years of Ellen been!  
Her very last that sunken eye has seen!

That half angelic being still must fade  
Till all the angel in the mind be made;—  
And now the closing scene will shortly come—  
She cannot visit sorrow at her home;  
But still she feeds the hungry, still prepares  
The usual softeners of the peasant's cares,  
And though she prays not with the dying now,  
She teaches them to die, and shows them how.

*The Quarterly Journal of Literature, Science, and the Arts, No. xiv. London, July, 1819.*

ANXIOUS to render the *Literary Chronicle* a faithful mirror of the literature and science of the day, and a register that shall keep pace with the progress that it is making, however rapidly, we shall not only be anxious to be the first to record every novelty, but shall never suffer any petty jealousies to prevent us from doing justice to the labours of our contemporaries; with this view, it is our intention, occasionally, to notice such periodical productions, as, by the ability with which they are conducted, have justly obtained considerable eminence. Among these, the *Quarterly Journal of Literature and Science*, edited at the Royal Institution, and the fourteenth number of which is just published, deserves particular notice.

The first article in this number is an introductory discourse delivered at the London Institution, by Mr. Brande, the principal object of which is to show the intimate union that subsists between the scientific and commercial interests of a country, and especially of Great Britain. The energy which has lately been displayed in this Institution by the erection of a noble building, and the foundation of lectures, will redeem it from the imputation cast on it, of being only a place where 'the wise men of the east buy books and read newspapers.'

Mr. Bauer, in a series of microscopical experiments on the red snow brought from Baffin's Bay, has clearly ascertained the colouring matter to be a vegetable substance, viz. the minute fungi of the genus *uredo* of a new species, to which he gives the specific name of *nivalis*. So minute are these particles, that the real diameter of an individual full grown fungus of *uredo nivalis*, is the one thousand six hundredth part of an inch, and consequently, to cover the surface of an entire square inch, two million five hundred and sixty thousand such fungi are requisite.

There is a curious paper on the cause of sleep, and on dreaming, by Dr. Park, in which, after noticing the opinions of former writers, and refuting many mistaken theories, he comes to the conclusion, that 'sleep proceeds from full and slow circulation in the brain, produced by the spontaneous remission of action in the cerebral vessels, simultaneously occurring with a retarded pulse, from diminished action of the heart;' and that 'sleep, with all its attendant phenomena, seems to depend upon the periodical changes of circulation that take place in the organs of mind and voluntary motion.' On the metaphysical phenomenon of sleep and dreaming, he has the following observations;—

'Dreaming occurs at the commencement of sleep, when the mental function is partially impeded, and still more frequently at its termination, when that function is not yet perfectly restored; but is attended in each case with somewhat different circumstances.

'As drowsiness approaches, and the effort of attention becomes fatiguing, the eyelids are suffered to close, and the observance of surrounding objects now no longer serving to ad-



monish the judgment, the train of ideas is left to the guidance of chance or imagination, and soon creates fortuitous or incongruous associations, which constitute our dreams.

'In this state persons forget where they are, or fancy they are still holding conversation; whilst the organs of speech are not actually employed more because the mind is unconscious that they have ceased to be exerted, than from an inability to exert them.

'The dreams that occur just before waking, are somewhat different from those that take place on falling asleep; they are generally more connected and more vivid, for the following reasons:—

'The activity of the brain is now renewed by rest, and the current of our thoughts flows more freely; but still the suggestions of fancy are not corrected by the observance of surrounding objects, while the avenue to the external senses yet remains closed; and thus the train of ideas may still be incongruous.

'Our morning dreams are more connected at one time than at another, which seems to depend upon the more or less perfect renewal of circulation in the organ, when some accidental cause of disturbance sets the mind at work again.'

Another paper in this number, which is deserving of notice, is entitled, 'A few Facts relating to Gas Illumination.' It is well known that it has hitherto been found impossible to purify coal gas sufficiently for lighting close rooms, on account of the sulphur it contains. The suffocating smell, and the property which it has of tarnishing every thing metallic, excludes its use from dwelling-houses, on account of the injury it would do to our health, our furniture, books, pictures, plate, paint, &c. These circumstances, coupled with the expensive apparatus required for coal gas, and the injury that it does to one of the most important branches of trade a maritime country can possess, its fisheries, induced Messrs. John and Philip Taylor to construct an apparatus for converting oil into gas, in which they have been completely successful.

Oil gas possesses many decided advantages over that made from coal: it contains no sulphur, nor suffocating smell when used in close rooms,—does no injury to furniture, plate, &c. and occasions no greater heat in proportion to the flame than oil burning in lamps, wax candles, &c. The apparatus is much less expensive, and requires so little labour and skill to manage it, that it may be introduced on its present construction into any dwelling-house without a nuisance:—

'The economy of light from oil gas may be judged of from the following data:—

'One gallon of common whale oil will produce about ninety cube feet of gas, and an Argand burner will require a cube foot and half per hour to maintain a perfect light; consequently, a gallon of oil, made into gas, will afford such a light for sixty hours, and the expense at a moderate price of oil will be, allowing for coals, labour, &c. not more for one burner than three farthings per hour.

'Such a burner will be equal, in intensity of light, to two Argand oil lamps, or to ten mould candles.

'The expense of Argand oil lamps is usually admitted to be about 1½d. per hour, each.

'Supposing ten mould candles to be burning, (at four to the lb. will be 2½lb. costing 2s. 11d.) 1-tenth part will be consumed in each hour, and the cost of the light is then 3½d. per hour.

'If wax candles be employed, the expense of a quantity of light equal to a gas burner for one hour, by the same mode of reckoning, allowing a candle to burn ten hours, and taking the price of wax candles at 4s. 6d. per lb. will cost about 1½d.

'The account will, therefore, stand thus—

'Argand burner oil gas, per hour, ½d.; Argand lamps, spermaceti oil, 3d.; mould candles, 3½d.; wax candles, 14d.

'In many cases it may be desirable to use a much smaller quantity of light, than such a burner as the one above calculated upon might produce; and instead of the light of ten candles, that of one or more may be given by using burners of a different description, and the expenditure of gas, and the cost, will be reduced in proportion.'

'The superiority of the light from oil gas, over other artificial lights, is fully shewn by its rendering the delicate shades of yellow and green nearly as distinct as when viewed by solar light.

'Mr. De Ville, of the Strand, who has made many important experiments and observations on gas illumination, with a view of applying it to light-houses, is inclined to estimate the average produce in gas of a gallon of oil, at eighty cubical feet.

'A single jet burner, giving the light of two candles and a half, consumes half a cubical foot of gas per hour.

'A double jet consumes three quarters of a foot to give twice the above light, and a treble jet requires one foot.

'The light of an Argand burner of coal gas, compared with one of spermaceti oil, may be estimated at 2½ to one; and of oil gas to coal gas, as 9 to 5.

'A curious fact respecting Argand's burners for gas is, that that those with few holes consume a comparatively larger quantity of gas than those having a greater number:—thus,

A burner with 15 holes consumes 2½ cubic feet per hour.

Ditto 12 ditto 2½ ditto.

Ditto 10 ditto 2½ ditto.

The holes being of the same dimensions in each burner.'

Indeed, the advantages of oil gas for close rooms are so numerous and so decided, that there is little doubt of it becoming generally adopted, particularly as every gentleman or tradesman may have the apparatus constructed in his own house at a moderate expense, independent of public companies, or large establishments, and in towns or parts of the town to which gas illumination does not extend.

By the translation of an original document inserted in this number, we see the want of truth and reality in the eulogiums so often made on Chinese justice; and it is difficult to conceive a more lamentable state of society than is thus presented; for, in addition to the barbarous cruelties peculiarly their own, the Chinese administration of justice has all the worst vices which can attend it in more civilized states. As this document gives us a much clearer insight into the state of society in China, on this subject, than the journals of all our travellers, we insert it without abridgement:—

"*Peking Gazette, August 9, 1817.*—Chow, the Yu-she (or censor) of Ho-nan, kneels to report, with profound respect, in the hearing of his majesty, the following circumstances, and to pray for his sacred instructions.

"The clear and explicit statement of punishments is a means of instruction to the people; the infliction of punishments is a case of unwilling necessity. For all courts there are fixed regulations to rule their conduct by, when cases do occur that require punishments to be inflicted in questioning. Magistrates are not, by law, permitted to exercise cruelties at their own discretion.

"But of late, district magistrates, actuated by a desire to be rewarded for their activity, have felt an ardent enthusiasm to inflict torture. And though it has been repeatedly prohibited by imperial edicts, which they profess openly to conform to, yet they really and secretly violate them.

"Whenever they apprehend persons of suspicious appearances, or those charged with great crimes, such as murder or robbery, the magistrates begin by endeavouring to seduce the prisoners to confess, and by forcing them to do so. On



every occasion they torture by pulling or twisting the ears, (the torturer having previously rendered his fingers rough by powder,) and cause them to kneel a long while upon chains. They next employ what they call, the Beauty's Bar\*, the Parrot's Beam†, the Refining Furnace‡, and other implements, expressed by other terms which they make use of. If these do not force confession, they double the cruelties exercised, till the criminal dies, (faints,) and is restored to life again, several times in a day. The prisoner, unable to sustain these, cruelties, is compelled to write down or sign a confession, (of what he is falsely charged with,) and the case any how is made out, placed on record, and, with a degree of self-glorying, is reported to your majesty. The imperial will is obtained, requiring the person to be delivered over to the board of punishments for further trial.

“After repeated examinations, and undergoing various tortures, the charges brought against many persons are seen to be entirely unfounded.

“As for example, in the case of the now-degraded Tæutæ, who tried Lew-te-woo, and of the Che-chow, who tried Pih-ken-king. These mandarins inflicted the most cruel tortures, in a hundred different forms, and forced a confession. Lew-te-woo, from being a strong robust man, just survived—life was all that was spared. The other, being a weak man, lost his life; he died as soon as he had reached the board at Peking. The snow-white innocence of these two men was afterwards demonstrated by the Board of Punishments.

“The cruelties exercised by the local magistrates, in examining by torture, throughout every district of Chih-le, cannot be described; and the various police runners, seeing the anxiety of their superiors to obtain notice and promotion, begin to lay plans to enrich themselves. In criminal cases, as murder and robbery, in debts, and affrays, they endeavour to involve those who appear to have the slightest connexion. The wind being raised, they blow the spark into a flame, and seize a great many people, that they may obtain bribes from those people, in order to purchase their liberation. Those who have nothing to pay are unjustly confined, or sometimes tortured, before being carried to a magistrate. In some instances, after undergoing repeated examinations in the presence of the magistrate, they are committed to the custody of people attached to the court, where they are fettered in various ways, so that it is impossible to move a single inch; and without paying a large bribe they cannot obtain bail. Their oppressions are daily accumulated to such a degree, and for so long a time, that at last death is the consequence.

“Since there is at this period particular occasion to seize banditti, if there be suspicious appearances, as the age or physiognomy corresponding to some offender described, it is, doubtless, proper to institute a strict inquiry.

“But it is a common and constant occurrence, that respecting persons not the least implicated, who are known to possess property, and to be of a timid disposition, pretences are made by the police to threaten and alarm them. If it be not affirmed that they belong to the Pih-leen-keou, (a proscribed sect,) it is said that they are a remnant of the rebels, and they are forthwith clandestinely seized, fettered, and most deliberately ill-used and insulted. The simple country people become frightened, and give up their property to obtain liberation, and think themselves very happy in having escaped so.

“I have heard, that in several provinces, Chih-le, Shan-tung, and Ho-nan, these practices have been followed ever since the rebellion; and wealth has been acquired in this way by many of the police officers. How can it be that the local magistrates do not know it; or is it, that they purposely connive at these tyrannical proceedings?

\* A torture, said to be invented by a judge's wife, and hence the name. The breast, small of the back, and legs bent up, are fastened to three cross-bars, which cases the person to kneel in great pain.

† The prisoner is raised from the ground by strings round the fingers and thumbs, suspended from a supple transverse beam.

‡ Fire is applied to the body.

“I lay this statement, with much respect, before your majesty, and pray that measures may be taken to prevent these evils. Whether my obscure notions be right or not, I submit with reverence.]

“Imperial reply.

“It is recorded.”

*Mazeppa, a Poem.* By Lord Byron. 8vo. pp. 69. London, 1819.

(Concluded from our last.)

THE Ode to Venice, which, with a Fragment, is added to *Mazeppa*, we suppose, to bring it to the usual price of his lordship's late productions, is a very spirited poem; the description of the ancient glory of Venice, as contrasted with its present state, is at once forcible, eloquent, and pathetic, and will atone for the violence of his lordship's party politics, with those who have the misfortune to differ from him. On this subject we must bestow a word;—that an English peer should be an avowed republican, and see nothing in a monarchical government, but

‘A heritage of servitude and woes,

A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows,’

is in itself sufficiently remarkable, and may be readily pardoned; but, that Lord Byron should re-echo the often refuted libel on the British navy, contained in the concluding stanza of this poem, shows a disposition which we had hoped his lordship did not possess. Whoever reads Mr. James's Account of the Naval Occurrences of the late War with the United States of America, will perceive, that in every engagement in which the Americans triumphed, they possessed a decided superiority in the size of the vessel, number and length of guns, weight of metal, and numerical force; not to mention the circumstance, that a great number on board the United States' vessels, were Englishmen, who fought with that desperation which a knowledge of the disgraceful death that awaited a defeat, naturally prompted; yet, in spite of all these advantages, unless the superiority in these respects was very great, on the American side, the British tars were always triumphant; with these remarks, which we deem necessary to counteract any effect that this charge, when made poetically, might have, we insert the whole poem:—

#### ODE.

On Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls  
Are level with the waters, there shall be  
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,  
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!  
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,  
What should thy sons do?—any thing but weep:  
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.  
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,  
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,  
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,  
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,  
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,  
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.  
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap  
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred years  
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;  
And every monument the stranger meets,  
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;  
And even the Lion all subdued appears,  
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,  
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats  
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along  
The soft waves, once all musical to song,  
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng  
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum



Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds  
 Were but the overbeating of the heart,  
 And flow of too much happiness, which needs  
 The aid of age to turn its course apart  
 From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood  
 Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.  
 But these are better than the gloomy errors,  
 The weeds of nations in their last decay,  
 When Vice walks forth with her unsolien'd terrors,  
 And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;  
 And Hope is nothing but a false delay,  
 The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,  
 When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,  
 And apathy of limb, the dull beginning  
 Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,  
 Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;  
 Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,  
 To him appears renewal of his breath,  
 And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;—  
 And then he talks of life, and how again  
 He feels his spirits soaring—albeit weak,  
 And of the fresher air, which he would seek;  
 And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,  
 That his thin finger feels not what it feels,  
 And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy  
 Chamber swims round and round—and shadows busy,  
 At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,  
 Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,  
 And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth  
 That which it was the moment ere our birth.

There is no hope for nations!—Search the page  
 Of many thousand years—the daily scene,  
 The flow and ebb of each recurring age,  
 The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,  
 Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean  
 On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear  
 Our strength away in wrestling with the air;  
 For 'tis our nature strikes us down: the beasts  
 Slaughter'd in hourly becatombs for feasts  
 Are of as high an order—they must go  
 Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.  
 Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,  
 What have they given your children in return?  
 A heritage of servitude and woes,  
 A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.  
 What! do not yet the red-hot plough-shares burn,  
 O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,  
 And deem this proof of royalty the *real*;  
 Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,  
 And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?  
 All that your sires have left you, all that Time  
 Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,  
 Spring from a different theme!—Ye see and read,  
 Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!  
 Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,  
 And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd  
 By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,  
 And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,  
 Gushing from Freedom's fountains—when the crowd,  
 Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,  
 And trample on each other to obtain  
 The cup which brings oblivion of a chain  
 Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they plough'd  
 The sand,—or if there sprang the yellow grain,  
 'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,  
 And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:—  
 Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds  
 Which they abhor, confound not with the cause  
 Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,  
 Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite  
 But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth  
 With all her seasons to repair the blight  
 With a few summers, and again put forth

Cities and generations—fair, when free—  
 For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!  
 Glory and Empire! once upon these towers  
 With Freedom—godlike Triad! how ye sate!  
 The league of mightiest nations, in those hours  
 When Venice was an envy, might abate,  
 But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate  
 All were enwrap'd: the feasted monarchs knew  
 And lov'd their hostess, nor could learn to hate,  
 Although they humbled—with the kingly few  
 The many felt, for from all days and climes  
 She was the voyager's worship;—even her crimes  
 Were of the softer order—born of Love,  
 She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,  
 But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;  
 For these restored the Cross, that from above  
 Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant  
 Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,  
 Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank  
 The city it has clothed in chains, which clank  
 Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe  
 The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;  
 Yet she but shares with them a common woe,  
 And call'd the "kingdom" of a conquering foe,—  
 But knows what all—and, most of all, we know—  
 With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone  
 O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;  
 Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own  
 A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;  
 If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone  
 His charless mountains, 'tis but for a time,  
 For tyranny of late is cunning grown,  
 And in its own good season tramples down  
 The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,  
 Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean  
 Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion  
 Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and  
 Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,  
 And proud distinction from each other land,  
 Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,  
 As if his senseless sceptre were a wand  
 Full of the magic of exploded science—  
 Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,  
 Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,  
 Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught  
 Her E-an-brethren that the haughty flag,  
 The floating fence of Albion's feeble crag,  
 May strike to those whose red right hands have bought  
 Rights cheaply earn'd with blood. Still, still, for ever  
 Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,  
 That it should flow, and overflow, than creep  
 Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,  
 Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,  
 And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,  
 Three paces, and then faltering:—better be  
 Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,  
 In their proud charnel of Thermopylae,  
 Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep  
 Fly, and one current to the ocean add,  
 One spirit to the souls our fathers had,  
 One freeman more, America, to thee!

'A Fragment' in prose, concludes this little work; it is a most unmeaning production, and relates to the death of some young friend of his lordship, while travelling in the East. As his lordship's prose is less known (and will ever remain so, if we may judge from the present specimen) than his poetry, we shall make an extract, premising that Augustus Darvell was a young man, well acquainted with the world, who had travelled much, but was a prey to some cureless disquiet, the cause of which his friend



could never discover. After travelling together to Smyrna, Darvell determined on a visit to Ephesus and Sardis, from which his friend endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. They had proceeded half-way, when the sudden illness of Darvell obliged them to halt at a Turkish cemetery, when, resting in a half reclining posture, on one of the tombstones, beneath the shade of a Cypress tree, he asked for some water, and directed Sulieman, a janitary, with great minuteness to a small well, where it might be found, but would not acknowledge that he had been there before. After quenching his thirst, which revived him for a moment, and collecting his spirits for an effort to speak, he thus began:—

“This is the end of my journey, and of my life—I came here to die: but I have a request to make, a command—for such my last words must be—You will observe it?”

“Most certainly; but have better hopes.”

“I have no hopes, nor wishes, but this—conceal my death from every human being.”

“I hope there will be no occasion; that you will recover, and —”

“Peace!—it must be so: promise this.”

“I do.”

“Swear it, by all that”—He here dictated an oath of great solemnity.

“There is no occasion for this—I will observe your request; and to doubt me is —”

“It cannot be helped,—you must swear.”

I took the oath: it appeared to relieve him. He removed a seal ring from his finger, on which were some Arabic characters, and presented it to me. He proceeded—

“On the ninth day of the month, at noon precisely (what month you please, but this must be the day), you must fling this ring into the salt springs which run into the Bay of Eleusis: the day after, at the same hour, you must repair to the ruins of the temple of Ceres, and wait one hour.”

“Why?”

“You will see.”

“The ninth day of the month, you say?”

“The ninth.”

As I observed that the present was the ninth day of the month, his countenance changed, and he paused. As he sat, evidently becoming more feeble, a stork, with a snake in her beak, perched upon a tombstone near us; and, without devouring her prey, appeared to be steadfastly regarding us. I know not what impelled me to drive it away, but the attempt was useless; she made a few circles in the air, and returned exactly to the same spot. Darvell pointed to it, and smiled: he spoke—I know not whether to himself or to me—but the words were only, “’Tis well!”

“What is well? what do you mean?”

“No matter: you must bury me here this evening, and exactly where that bird is now perched. You know the rest of my injunctions.”

He then proceeded to give me several directions as to the manner in which his death might be best concealed. After these were finished, he exclaimed, “You perceive that bird?”

“Certainly.”

“And the serpent writhing in her beak?”

“Doubtless: there is nothing uncommon in it; it is her natural prey. But it is odd that she does not devour it.”

He smiled in a ghastly manner, and said, faintly, “It is not yet time!” As he spoke, the stork flew away. My eyes followed it for a moment, it could hardly be longer than ten might be counted. I felt Darvell’s weight, as it were, increase upon my shoulder, and, turning to look upon his face, perceived that he was dead!

After this specimen, we think, the best friends of Lord Byron, will be sorry to see him quit his prolific muse, to write ‘Fragments’ in prose.

*Report from the Select Committee on Acts respecting Insolvent Debtors.* Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be printed, 10th May, 1819. Fol. pp. 216. London.

THERE are few subjects in legislation more difficult, or, in a commercial country like Great Britain, of more importance, than the laws of debtor and creditor; and to provide statutes that should protect the property of the creditor, secure the unfortunate from unmerited oppression, and punish the fraudulent, is a perfection which, if we cannot attain, it is our duty to attempt. Much has often been said on the cruelty of these laws in England—and certainly, at no very remote period, cases of extreme individual oppression were not unfrequent; but, on casting our eyes to other countries, we shall find that they are much less humane: in the United States of America, that country which, unfettered by former laws and an established state of society, (which always renders any great innovation dangerous,) the laws on this subject are much more oppressive; and such instances of their cruelty occur as were never met with in England, at any period of which we have read\*.

The Committee, whose Report we have now under notice, was appointed to take into consideration the state of the law respecting the discharge of insolvent debtors, and the several acts passed in the fifty-third, fifty-fourth, and fifty-sixth years of the present reign, and as the result of their inquiry, they express their decided approbation of the principle on which these laws were founded, which is simply this, that a debtor ought to be released from custody on making a *bona fide* division of all his property amongst his creditors, except in cases where the conduct of the debtor appears to have been fraudulent; but this principle, so unobjectionable in itself, has been much controverted by the defective provisions of the law, and by the practice of the Insolvent Debtors’ Court, from which considerable injustice and inconvenience have accrued. Some of the principal defects, as pointed out by the Committee, are, that, as from three to four thousand cases pass through the court in one year, they must be imperfectly inquired into; that whether a creditor gives up much property or little, the term of his imprisonment remains the same; that the insolvent does not assign his property until the period of his liberation, and thus often squanders it in prison, where he may choose to remain, in defiance of his creditors; that the expenses attending the suitors of this court are very great, principally owing to the ‘establishment of a system of fees by the present commissioner, a considerable share of which he has appropriated to himself,’ assigning as ‘the reason why he thought it desirable that he himself should take a portion of the fees, was “that, when called upon for the purpose, he might know, and be enabled to state, and that correctly.

\* In support of this assertion, we shall refer to an affidavit made by Jas. L. Bell, keeper of the gaol and under-sheriff, and Ruggles Hubbard, sheriff, of New York, from which it appears, that within the year 1816, a man, named Charles L’Avon, was confined in gaol thirty days, for a debt of one dollar and ninety-four cents; and another, named Henry Smith, the same period, for a debt of five dollars; that debtors, to a great number, are committed to gaol, some for six shillings and similar sums, and that, between the 1st of January, 1816, and the 1st of January, 1817, there were committed seven hundred and forty-nine debtors for debts under the sum of twenty-five dollars, all of whom must have starved but for the Humane Society.



might know, and be enabled to state, and that correctly, the full amount of fees taken, as allowed by himself!!!” It appears from the Report, that although the commissioner has a salary of £2000, and the chief clerk £400, per annum, yet that the former receives 5s. 8d. and the latter 9s. 2d. as fees, for the discharge of every insolvent: the commissioner also receives £1, and the clerk 9s., on the appointment of every agent to the court, the number of which already amounts to one hundred and twenty.

The Report concludes by recommending, as provisions in the new act, that three commissioners should be appointed, instead of one; that when an insolvent makes his option to take the benefit of this act, he should be compelled to deliver all his property into the hands of an assignee, within a much shorter period than the present act obliges, and that the creditors may compel him to deliver up his property, to be divided amongst them; that all fees and stamps should be abolished in the court; that more effectual provision should be made to render any property, which the insolvent may acquire after his discharge, liable to the debts which he had previously contracted; and that none but regularly admitted attornies should practise as agents in the court. The Committee also recommends to abolish the privilege of the rules of the Fleet and of the King's Bench.

Considering the Insolvent Act as a species of minor bankrupt law, and the nearer it approaches it the better, we can see no reason why, in the former case, a man's person and property should be protected, while, in the latter, his exertions may be crippled or deprived of their proper stimulus, by a law which subjects them to a continual atonement for indiscretion, or to repair misfortunes which were unavoidable. Surely, the consideration that the bankrupt is an insolvent debtor on a much larger scale, could not justify such a provision; were this the case, we might indeed say, with the author of *Hudibras*, that—

‘Little rogues submit to fate,  
That great ones may enjoy the world in state.’

But it is the principle of English law to equalize the rights of individuals, whatever their rank and situation, and we see no reason why a doctrine so equitable should be deviated from in the present instance. At the same time, the strictest scrutiny should be instituted into the property of an insolvent, that it might be rendered available to the payment of his debts, and that fraud should be punished as well as defeated.

The evidence adduced before the Committee is interesting, but much too voluminous for us to attempt an analysis: nor is it necessary, as the Report, the leading points of which we have noticed, is founded upon it; and, although differing in many points and quite contradictory in others, yet the conclusions to which the Committee have come, are such as the evidence warranted. The general impression among the witnesses examined, none of whom, it will be recollected, were insolvent debtors, seems to be that the act is too lenient—this is particularly the opinion of the creditors and examiners.—The attornies complain that the agents of the court are uncertificated, but acknowledge that they, in some cases, charge less than they would do themselves.—The barristers wish for more commissioners and longer investigations—and the officers of the court are, in fact, the only persons who seem satisfied with things as they are.

As to the influence that this act has on the morals of so-

ciety, the evidence is contradictory. Mr. Nixon, warden of the Fleet, states, that the act increases the number of prisoners—is an inducement to persons to take credit when they have not the means of paying—that much money is squandered in prison, where riot and disorder is more prevalent than formerly; and this, he thinks, would be remedied by extending the term of imprisonment to six months. He also adds his ‘doubts that any one man has ever taken the benefit of this act conscientiously.’ Mr. Jones, the marshal of the King's Bench, on the contrary, states his prison to be as ‘regular as any private street in London’—that more money was squandered away in prison before the passing of this act than since—and that, although the number of prisoners has increased of late years, it is rather attributable to the distress of the times than the operation of the act; and in these opinions he is confirmed by his clerk, Mr. Brooshoft.

It has always occurred to us, that although the Insolvent Act may be an inducement to persons getting in debt, it also renders it more difficult, by increasing the precaution of the creditor; and in this opinion we find some of the witnesses, particularly a sheriff's officer, who says there is less credit, or what he terms *faith*, than formerly.

We shall now conclude our remarks with a single extract; it is from the evidence of Godfrey Sikes, Esq. a special pleader:—

‘Have you considered, and do you think, that a jury could be introduced into the insolvent debtors court with any advantage, and under what circumstances?—I should think it would take so much time that very little business would be done. If every case went to a jury, it would be hardly practicable to any extent; if a cause is tried upon affidavit, or where there is no defence, it is soon determined. As far as I have found from my experience, living among people of the middle class of life, my father having been a manufacturer in the country, the grievances they suffer are great. It was very well said, by Mr. Alderman Rothwell, that the people in the higher situations of life, do not know the inconveniences sustained by those in the middle walks of life. There is one particular circumstance which I would mention to the committee: I come from the town of Sheffield; there are some namesakes of mine, who live at Hull, but who are no relations of mine whatever, who have been in the habit of supplying the town of Sheffield with Swedish iron, for a long period of time; there was a committee of gentlemen in London, some years ago, when it was proposed to lay a duty upon iron, to whom a clerk of that house declared, that they never had lost one farthing by the town of Sheffield, which proved that that town was in good credit, but they dealt with opulent people, who re-sold to smaller houses, and these had losses; but these great merchants had experienced no losses. I think the grievances of the middle classes are not sufficiently felt; we feel the inconvenience, when we hear of a man being confined in prison; a man, it is said, is secluded from society, and his endeavours are useless; but I do not think that the sufferings of this middle class of society, are sufficiently brought before this Committee; they are, in consequence of their losses, reduced in society, and pay their debts as far as they can. It has always struck me, with respect to the insolvent debtors' act, that sufficient attention is not paid to this class of persons; we hear of a man who is confined long in prison, in all parts of the kingdom. I do hope, that under this act, there will be an examination into the circumstances of debtors, to compel them to show how they have spent their property; which I think the legislature will not be able to do, unless they impose imprisonment upon the debtors; it is, I would say, an extremely hard case that it should be so; but it has been well said, by Mr. Alderman Rothwell, that there are not very many severe creditors. I believe that wickedness is more common

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on the part of the debtor, than severity on that of the creditor; and, though it may happen, that some few honest debtors may be subject to this punishment, I think good would result to society, by this compulsion, to make debtors give up their property while they have something to give up.

'Generally, you mean to say, a jury would not do good, from the time it would take?—Yes.

'Do you consider, that it would be advantageous to allow a jury in cases of large debt, at the option of the creditor?—I think it would do good.

'Do you think it would be advantageous, where questions of fraud or dishonesty are to be tried?—I think it might be so; the insolvent debtors act is expressly passed for the relief of insolvent debtors; the judge sets out with an inclination to discharge the debtor; it is the natural leaning of the court.'

*The Siege of Carthage; an Historical Tragedy. In Five Acts. By William Fitzgerald, Jun. 8vo. pp. 56. London, 1819.*

WE stumbled at the very threshold of the preface, on seeing it headed 'Justice! Patronage! and Merit!' and were afraid that this play had been unfortunate enough to be less thought of by the managers than by the author, and that, therefore, the latter was determined to let the public decide; but on the contrary, we find that the 'Siege of Carthage' has not been offered to any theatre, and that the author only wishes 'to obtain justice, sue for patronage, and thereby hope the reward of merit.' How far he is likely to obtain any of these, by the present publication, seems doubtful, and we cannot but consider his calling on the public, to interest themselves in procuring a representation of his drama, as very injudicious; but he is a young man, now in his twentieth year, and will better know the value of his own productions, when he learns how they are estimated by the public. 'The Siege of Carthage' is by no means destitute of merit; some of the scenes are very dramatic, and there is considerable vigour in the language, though often disfigured by vulgarisms, which entirely spoil the beauty of the best passages; the first two acts are by far the best, and if the author had contented himself with making it into three acts, and calling it a melodrama, we doubt not, but that he might have been gratified with seeing it produced on the stage. As a specimen of the language, we select a passage from a scene in the senate, where Cato is urging the destruction of Carthage, while Scipio endeavours to save it:—

*Cato.* Is this a Roman! is this Scipio!  
You amaze me! the senate look like mad!  
Well they may,—you'd pull them down from power;  
You bid us unbind our wreaths and waste them:  
Whose would be the gain? *Carthage!* Senators!  
I would not say the man were a traitor,—  
But he that would plead the cause of Carthage  
Is not a Roman.

*Scipio.* What! not a Roman!  
Wert thou any other but great Cato,  
These walls should not long hold one of our souls,  
None dare to startle me with such a blast.  
Not a Roman! aspiring monster!  
Cry out, Carthage must be destroy'd? *here, here,*  
Witness those men, cannot their fate move ye?  
Drag forth each Carthaginian in chains,  
Make one flame of them,—would that be Roman?  
Strike the infant smiling in the lap of sleep,  
And cry, thou diest by *Roman justice,*  
Would that add one laurel to a fair wreath?  
*Never:* it would wither the lasting hue;—  
Yet you do this, aye, ten-fold more than this,  
When you crush Carthage.'

## Original Correspondence.

### FRENCH PLAYS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LITERARY CHRONICLE.

SIR,—While our own drama, enriched by the inimitable charms of Shakespeare's muse, is suffered to languish under the neglect of the nobility, French plays continue to be highly patronized and encouraged, and month after month new actors and actresses are brought from the Boulevards and Palais Royal, whose talents are below mediocrity, and who could only have had engagements at the lowest theatres in Paris. The performances in Argyle Street, and at Almack's, consist of comedies of the second and third class, and of farces, principally from the pens of Martainville and Picard, whose broad hints and undisguised humour find admirers in an English metropolis, while the wit and elegance of Corneille and Racine are unnoticed. Among the regulations of the French theatre in London, there is one which prohibits the audience from speaking any other language but French; another, that all marks of disapprobation shall be omitted, and that applause should be bestowed only with moderation. I hope I am not much tainted with those prejudices which cannot see merit in a foreigner; nor would I wish to restrain our nobility and gentry from the liberty of amusing themselves in any way they may deem fit; nor do I envy the taste which should prefer the jingling rhyme of the French drama, to the lofty metre of our own school: yet I cannot but regret that there is not a little more patriotism displayed in support of the national drama, and the national establishments, which are now suffering severely from the vitiated taste, for so I must call it, of our countrymen.

The change that has taken place in the taste and manners of the British nation, in this respect, is remarkable. Cheerful and facetious, but yet sedate, our ancestors were contented with true English fare, even in their amusements, while we relish nothing but what is of foreign extraction; and, in the profusion of our bounty, give to Italian singers and dancers, set salaries, equal to those of a Secretary of State, or the Judges of England, independent of the vast sums which these fluttering fiddling gentry make by benefits, private balls, and concerts, so that they carry away with them money sufficient to purchase estates in their own country, where their wisdom is as much extolled as our vanity and foolish extravagance is laughed at and despised.

I cannot better close these observations than by the following admirable satire on this subject, written some years ago:—

### ON THE PRESENT TASTE FOR PUBLIC PLEASURE IN LONDON.

—*Migravit ab aure voluptas,  
Ornis, ad incertos oculos, et gaudia vana.*—HOM.

Great Shakespeare's nature, Otway's tale of woe,  
The fire of Dryden, and the pomp of Rowe,  
Young's dignity, and Southern's tearful strain,  
Solicit now, Britannia's sons in vain;  
Jonson's stern humour, Vanburgh's sprightly ease,  
And Congreve's flashes, now no longer please.  
Purcell's soft notes, Corelli's melody,  
And Handel, wondrous master! to untie  
The hidden chains and links of harmony,



With unavailing efforts tempt the ear  
 Their varied powers of magic sound to hear;  
 Sated with excellence, to whim we fly,  
 And own no sense but the capricious eye;  
 With transport see the Antic's French grimace  
 And gestures, never stealing into grace;  
 The human form, in nature's high disdain  
 Contorted, as in agony of pain;  
 Th' extended quivering foot with rapture view,  
 Critics sublime of Pantomima's shoe.

I remain, your's, &c.

DRAMATICUS.

#### PUBLIC MORALS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LITERARY CHRONICLE.

SIR—There can be no doubt but the legislature of this country often evince much tenderness and philanthropy in their deliberations, and often pursue, with admirable zeal and exemplary patience, questions by which the sufferings of humanity are ultimately relieved. The Poison Prevention Bill, however much it may be scoffed at, is perhaps one of the humblest of their efforts; but we must not lose sight of the higher exercise of the same principle, in repeated exertions to alleviate the suffering classes of various descriptions, which is to be recognised in the attempts to ameliorate the condition of climbing boys, and in the never to be forgotten noble efforts to snatch from tyranny and misery the suffering natives of untutored Africa. Yet, Sir, it not unfrequently happens, that small objects attract attention, while others of greater magnitude escape notice—but it is self-evident that those who can feel pleasure in relieving a small class, must feel higher gratification as they extend their line of action. Now, Sir, I am of opinion, and certainly not singular in that opinion, that there is one vice which pervades this great metropolis, the cure of which would give deserved praise, if not immortal honour, to its successful physician. Sir, the vice I allude to, and this vast metropolis labours under none greater, is that of dram-drinking:—the horrible consequences of this pernicious practice, are, alas! too notorious to require illustration—which excites more compassion in contemplative moralists, from the certain truth, that the destructive delusions of drunkenness, when rooted, are rarely overcome from moral conviction. Now, Sir, taking the hint from *labelling bottles of poison*, I would have the liquor vats labelled—not with *Old Tom*, *Cordial Gin*, or other inviting names, that at present prevail,—but with an appropriate motto, that should immediately apprise the consumer of the gradual, subtle, and deadly consequences of drinking ardent spirits. Perhaps a legislative enactment,\* that each bottle, cask, or vat should bear a legibly printed motto of 'Beware of dram-drinking,' as boards in enclosed grounds 'Beware of steel traps,' 'No goods above 5l. value,' &c. as in coach offices,—or any other precaution for the public good. Or, perhaps, it would be well to have a tablet hung up in every liquor shop, descriptive of the sufferings of the victims of drunkenness. The pawnbrokers exhibit the terms upon which they are bound to deal with their wretched customers, and why should not the publican? Fearing I may have trespassed too far, I shall here close these hints, not without a hope that they may encourage some of your more able correspondents to pursue this subject.

I am, Sir, your's, &c.

D. G.

\* I suggest a preventive remedy, believing that neither raising the price of liquors nor any legal penalty or punishment would have the desired effect.

#### THE FATE OF BRITISH POETS.

WE know not where, among the same number of men, occupied in the same pursuit, so many instances of unhappiness could be discovered as among the British poets. Some, indeed, have been the merited victims of their own intemperate follies; but to the lovers of good old times, who shrink back when they hear of a sleek and well-fed modern bard, receiving three thousand guineas for the copyright of a modish and mawkish poem, it may afford some consolation, to review those who have been tenants of the cell or the garret, and whose stomachs have kept an inverted sabbath of six days out of the seven. Greene, it is true, died of a surfeit of pickled herrings and old Rhenish; Marlow and Motteux were killed in drunken quarrels at a brothel; Fenton drank two bottles of Port every afternoon, in his easy chair, and died by attempting a reduction; Randolph, Somerville, and Parnell, fell sacrifices to Bacchus; G. Etheridge broke his neck down stairs, while bowing his friends out after dinner; and May was so delighted with the success of his 'reviewing,' that he went to bed one night after having drank freely, in apparent health, and was found dead in the morning. Some indeed assert, that his night cap was tied too tightly under his chin, but Andrew Marvel attributes his death to an equally probable cause of suffocation. Look now on the shadowy side of the picture: Denham, Nat. Lee, Collins, Cowper, Smart, Brook, G. A. Stevens, Bamfylde, and Ferguson, all died in idiocy or madness; of the last, a most touching incident is related,—when committed to the receptacle of the insane, a consciousness of his dreadful fate seemed to come over him; at the moment of his entrance, he uttered a wild cry of despair, which was echoed from all the inmates of the dreadful mansion, and left an impression of inexpressible horror on the friends who attended. In a few days, his poverty-stricken mother, who had reluctantly committed her son to a public hospital, from her inability to support him, received remittances sufficient to defray the expence of his attendance at home; but they arrived too late, the poor maniac was already dead. Otway was suffocated from the rapacity of hunger; John Brown, (the author of *Barbarossa*.) and Chatterton, committed suicide. George Wither, Dekker, Cotton, Savage, and Lloyd, breathed their last in gaols. Lovelace, once the pride of courts, after losing his mistress, like Biron in *Isabella*, avoided prison only by concealment, and died in a miserable lodging near Shoe Lane. Butler and Ben Jonson each experienced the worst extremes of poverty. Andrew Marvel is supposed to have been poisoned. Quarles died heart-broken at the destruction of his whole possessions (among which he most regretted his books and MSS.) by the Puritans. Drummond is said, and we believe it to be true, notwithstanding Mr. Campbell's bitter sarcasm, never to have recovered his shock, on hearing of the murder of Charles I. Skirley and his wife died of fright at the fire of London, and poor George Sewell, after writing in the *Spectator*, and living in a polished circle, had not a single friend to close his eyes. He was buried meanly, under a hollow tree, in the boundary of Hampstead Church Yard, and, however courted in his life-time, has not, even now, a turf hillock to point out the spot of his repose.

X.



## LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

[Mr. Williams's defence of Mr. Reynolds, in a recent case of damages, for publishing a libel on the character of a Roman Catholic clergyman, having excited much public interest, and being closely connected with the best interests of literature, at the suggestion of several friends we are induced to give a sketch of it: Friar Hayes, the plaintiff, it may be recollected, was sent to represent, in Rome, the ultra Roman Catholic interest of Ireland, and to remonstrate with the Pope for agreeing to cede the veto to the king of England. It was for giving a false description of the Friar's behaviour while in the papal dominions, that the action in question was brought, as well as several others; the defendant suffered judgment to go by default, and a jury was summoned in the Sheriff's Court to assess damages. The Journal in which the offensive article appeared being no longer in existence, and our pursuits being in some degree similar to the professed ones of that paper, many persons have hinted their belief that *The Literary Chronicle* is conducted by the same editor, and is in fact the same property under another title; such opinions being quite erroneous, we embrace this occasion of disavowing the fact, and trust, without wishing to reflect upon that Journal, that the manner in which *The Literary Chronicle* is conducted is sufficient proof of this assertion.—ED.]

MR. WILLIAMS began with calling this case 'The Massacre of Booksellers;' he observed, that the vindictiveness of a monk was almost proverbial; and Father Hayes being a man of the most liberal education, had proceeded to revenge this alleged libel upon classical rather than legal grounds. In the first epic poem with which we were acquainted, we found one hero sacrificing no less than twelve persons in revenge for the loss of his friend; and another, whose spirit was of smaller calibre, was contented with only six; and Friar Hayes, proceeding in the same way, was to be appeased only by sacrificing five unfortunate booksellers to the manes of his injured and departed character. The learned gentleman then took a detailed view of the circumstances which led to the plaintiff's mission to Rome, and contended, that he had not been dragged forth to the public from his obscurity in Ireland; but that the whole of the alleged libel was connected with that mission, the defendant never having seen or spoken to him in the whole course of his life, and, therefore, was incapable of entertaining any malignant or personal enmity towards him. His was not the case of a man who had been wantonly brought forth from his retirement; but who had voluntarily thrust himself into a bad eminence. And, he added, what right had Friar Hayes to expect a peculiar dispensation from the fate of place? Did he think he could swagger about the imperial city with the same impunity as when he was in his hermitage at Wexford? Could he hope to escape the customary strictures of the press upon public men? who, by the bye, had, in general, rather be noticed by abuse than not be noticed at all. Public notice was the daily food of public characters, and their retiring from it would be like a man's retiring from a long course of brandy to simple water. He begged them to bear in mind, that it was not the author that was before them, but the mere vendor of the paper, a bookseller in Oxford Street, who knew nothing of the alleged libel till he was called upon to plead to it, and who was now only desirous of escaping, as easily as he could, from the dilemma into

which he had inadvertently fallen, in consequence of the peculiar snares which beset his calling. He conjured the jury, when the paper should be laid before them, to look minutely into it, and judge how it could be likely to excite a bookseller's suspicions; nothing could be more general than its contents.—Letters from North Wales, High Price of Books, Anecdotes of Wilkes, The Tear of Pity, Calidoscopes, &c.—he could not conceive a less objectionable publication.

The learned gentleman then remarked at great length on the hardship of the law of libel, which calls upon a man to plead to the truth of every thing he publishes in books, in pamphlets, or even in newspapers, which are brought reeking from the press, and sold in his name by hundreds, while he is totally unconscious of one syllable of their contents. And yet he may be called upon to justify in detail, even to the ruin of his family. If the law were to be applied as it was written, he could only say, that every bookseller was a driveller who did not instantly shut up shop, and retire to work in a ditch, rather than continue in so dangerous a trade. A bookseller, as the law now stood, was responsible for every sentence in every book which passed through his hands, whether in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or Sanscrit, or indeed any other language; and certainly, if it was enforced, no man could write—no man could publish without an attorney at one elbow, and his counsel at the other. These sort of prosecutions had sprung up of late years; and were a novelty unknown to the *literati* of the brightest period of English wit and satire; for who ever heard of Curl or Lintot being called upon to justify the innumerable libels sent forth to the world, by Pope and Swift. Mr. Williams was here interrupted by the plaintiff's solicitor, who observed that the prosecution would have been dropped, had the author been given up. To which Mr. Williams replied,—as well might the defendant be asked to catch the comet's tail—he did not know the author—the action was instituted upon the presumption that he did, but this was not the fact; it was wholly impossible for him to know the contents of all his books; and, trusting they would not give large damages, at the expense of the wrong person, he concluded with saying, that this was decidedly a case for letting off the defendant at mere nominal damages.—The Jury gave Five Pounds; the damages were laid at £1,000!

## MY AUNT; A SKETCH.

*'Nothing extenuate, nor ought set down in malice.'*

My aunt is in comfortable circumstances, in the wane of life, and as fondly attached to the fashions and follies of her youth, as though she were transplanted again into it. 'For my part,' she cries, with an energetic emphasis, 'I am sick of the ways of my neeces; nothing but gadding about; dress, gaudy dress, like the birds in the fable; baneful passions; giggling at every trifle.—Where shall we go to night? Will 'Squire Pique be at the assembly?' 'Dear me! aunt, you had better stay at home. The tooth-ache or the rheumatism are sure to return with their accustomed violence. Old maids indeed! Old people are always in the way;' and so on, till the old mansion in which we live, trembles on its structure. Therefore, my aunt is seen to the best advantage at church, to which place she as regularly goes, as the chiming bells



are heard. And you might behold her enter the aisle, like a fairy queen, gliding primly, yet silently along to her pew. The graceful dip she gives to the pew-opener is admirably lady-like; her elegantly bound prayer-book, being brought hither by her footman, of the dandy school, is placed before her with careful precision. Having seated herself in a corner of the pew, facing the pulpit, the crimson velvet supports her back, and the hassock her feet. Her hands meet upon her lap, and her fingers are interlaced like those of a breathing statue. A sprig of some choice exotic reposes on her bosom, in company with a pearl necklace, which encircles her neck, and suspends the miniature of her first lover. Her dress is rather antiquated, but remarkably neat and decorous. Her favourite bonnet is somewhat quakeress-like, across which a splendid veil is tied, but not used, unless some presuming eye should venture too long or too often towards her face, which is then drawn over her shaded beauty, like a transparent curtain worn by a nun in the cloisters of a convent, through which her piercing dark eyes perceive each gradation of the worship, rebuking, very properly, every impropriety of behaviour manifested by her volatile nieces. But the service begun, her China fan conceals the sanctity of her devotion behind its semicircle, beating her whispers of faith to religion with fresh air, and cooling her ardour for the pardon of her fellow-creatures in unison with herself. As she is passionately fond of music, the organ's interludes and chorusses, when played skilfully, are her chiefest delight, most of which she plays from memory, when at her harpsichord at home. When the sublime poetry of Sternhold and Hopkins, is given out with the confined breath of the clerk, owing to the tight embraces of his spectacles, her voice is an acquisition, and woe to the disturbing cough, or the rejoicing rattles of the snuff-receiving nose, if they intrude with her pleasures. To the doctor's sermon she is scrupulously attentive, and often writes notes without the use of her glasses; and when the service is concluded, there is not a lady, to her credit be it said, smiles more agreeably, curtsies more affably, speaks more prettily, and loves attentions more fondly, than my aunt Tabby.

J. R. P.

July 6th, 1819.

## ON COMETS.

Oh! on thy rapid prow to glide,  
To sail the boundless skies with thee!  
To plow the twinkling stars aside,  
Like foam-bells on a tranquil sea!

To brush the embers from the Sun,  
The icicles from off the Pole,  
Then far to other systems run,  
Where other Moons and Planets roll!

Hogg.

Of all the celestial bodies, Comets have given rise to the greatest number of speculations and conjectures. Their strange appearance has, at all times, been a matter of terror to the vulgar, who have uniformly looked upon them as evil omens, forerunners of war, pestilence, famine, &c. Others, less superstitious, supposed them to be meteors raised in the higher regions of the air; but we find that some part of the modern doctrine concerning them, had been received into the ancient Italic and Pythagorean schools; for they held them to be so far of the nature of planets, that they had their periodical times of appearing; that they were out of sight for a long time,

while they were carried aloft, at an immense distance from the earth, but became visible when they descended into the lower regions of the air, when they were nearer to us. Aristotle asserted, that as the heavens were unchangeable, and not liable to generation or corruption, Comets could not be heavenly bodies, but meteors which blazed, until the matter of which they were formed was consumed. Seneca, who had seen two comets, declared his opinion, that they were not meteors, or fires suddenly kindled, but the eternal productions of nature.

It was not till some time after people began to throw off the fetters of superstition and ignorance, which had so long held them, that any rational hypothesis was formed concerning comets. Kepler, a man, in other respects, of considerable genius, indulged in the most extravagant conjectures: he considered the planets to be large animals, who swam round the sun by means of certain fins, acting upon the ethereal fluid as those of fishes do on the water, and comets to be monstrous and uncommon animals, generated in the celestial spaces. A yet more ridiculous opinion, if possible, was that of John Bodin, a learned Frenchman of the sixteenth century, who maintained that comets are 'spirits which have lived on the earth innumerable ages, and being at last arrived on the confines of death, celebrate their last triumph, or are recalled to the firmament like shining stars. This is followed by famine, plague, &c. because the cities and people destroy the governors and chiefs, who appease the wrath of God.' But, to quit the extravagant conjectures of the ancients for more certain data, which Tycho Brache, Newton, and more modern astronomers, have furnished, we may observe that a Comet is an opaque, spherical, and solid body, performing revolutions about the sun in elliptical orbits, which have the sun in one of their foci.

There is a popular division of Comets into three kinds, viz. *bearded*, *tailed*, and *hairy Comets*, though, in effect, this division rather relates to the several circumstances of the same Comet than to the phenomenon of several; thus, when the Comet is eastward of the sun, and moves from it, it is said to be *bearded*, because the light precedes it in manner of a beard; when the Comet is westward of the sun, and sets after it, it is said to be *tailed*, because the train follows it in manner of a tail; lastly, when the Comet and the sun are diametrically opposite, (the earth being between them,) the train is hid behind the body of the comet, excepting a little that appears around it, in form of a border of hair, or coma, (*χόμη*) whence it is called *hairy*, and whence the name of Comet is derived.

The estimates that have been made as to the magnitude of Comets are not sufficiently accurate to be depended upon, varying from one third of the diameter of the earth to three times its size: and some are recorded to have been as large as the sun. Their distance from the sun is not more clearly ascertained: Sir Isaac Newton deduced the conclusion, that all Comets, while they are visible, are not further distant from the sun than three times the earth's distance from the sun. The frequent appearance of Comets, and their velocity, which does not exceed what they might acquire by their gravity, towards the sun, seems to put it past all doubt that they move planet-like in elliptic orbits, though exceedingly eccentric; and so return again, though after long periods. The apparent velocity of the Comet of 1472, as observed by Regiomontanus, was such as to carry it through 40 degrees of a great circle in twenty-four hours; and that of 1770 was



observed to move through more than 145 degrees in the last twenty five hours.

Sir Isaac Newton computed the heat of the Comet which appeared in 1680, to be, when nearest to the sun, two thousand times hotter than red hot iron. It travelled at the rate of 880,000 miles an hour, or 244 in a second. The number of Comets that are stated in the most accurate accounts that have appeared, since the commencement of our era, is about five hundred; and, before that period, about one hundred others are recorded to have been seen; though it is probable that not more than one half of them were Comets.

Comets, in describing their elliptic orbits round the sun, have been found to be disturbed by the action of the larger planets, Jupiter and Saturn; but the great eccentricity of their orbits makes it impossible, in the present state of mathematical science, to assign the quantity of that disturbance for an indefinite number of revolutions, though it may be done for a limited portion of time. Dr. Halley, when he predicted the return of the Comet of 1682, took into consideration the action of Jupiter, and concluded that it would increase the periodic time of the re-appearance to the end of the year 1758, or the beginning of 1759. He professed, however, to have made this calculation hastily, or, as he expresses it, *levi calamo*. The effects, both of Jupiter and Saturn, on the return of the same Comet, were afterwards calculated more accurately by Clairaut, who found that it would be retarded 511 days by the action of the former planet, and 100 by the action of the latter; in consequence of which, the return of the Comet to its perihelion would be on the 15th of April, 1759. He admitted, at the same time, that he might be a month wrong in his calculation. The Comet actually reached its perihelion on the 13th of March, just 33 days earlier than was predicted; affording, in this way, a very striking verification of the theory of gravity, and the calculation of disturbing forces. The same Comet may be expected again about the year 1835.

The Comet of 1770 came so near to the earth, as to have its periodic time increased by two days, according to La Place's computation; and if it had been equal in mass to the earth, it would have augmented the length of the year by not less than two hours and forty-eight minutes. The same Comet also passed through the middle of the satellites of Jupiter. Hence it is reasonable to conclude, that no material, or even sensible alteration, has ever been produced in our system by the action of a Comet.

A Comet appeared in 1807, which was distinctly seen by the naked eye for many weeks in September and October: its diameter, according to Dr. Herschel, was 538 miles, and it appeared nearest the sun on the 12th of September, at ten o'clock in the evening; it was then distant thirty-nine millions of leagues from the sun, and fifty-four from the earth.

In the beginning of September, 1811, a Comet, which had before been visible in Jamaica, and other parts of the world, made its appearance in England; it was of peculiar size and brilliancy, and was observed for some months, during which time the weather was very sultry.

#### THE NEW COMET.

The attention of the learned world has been unexpectedly called to observe a new comet, which has made its appearance in the Northern Hemisphere. If we mistake not, it was stated, a short time ago, that a Comet was

observed at Aberdeen, but, from its not having been seen at any other place, nor observed by scientific persons, it was suspected to have been only a meteor. However, on Thursday, the 1st instant, it was observed in York, Leeds, and Edinburgh; at the latter place, it appeared about eleven o'clock, 'in the north part of the heavens, with its tail directed to the zenith, and having an altitude of about 10 degrees. It came to the meridian, a little after twelve o'clock. Its longitude, roughly estimated, is about three signs 10 degrees, and its latitude, 22 degrees north; hence it is situated near the shoulder of the Lynx, and will form the apex of an isosceles triangle, in which the equal sides, terminating in Capella and Castor, have an inclination of about 120 degrees. Its nucleus is very brilliant, and is about three fourths of the diameter of Jupiter. The whole breadth of the coma, or head of the Comet, is about thrice the diameter of the nucleus; its tail was seen to extend for several degrees, but from the Comet's being within about 22 degrees of the sun, neither the form of the coma nor the length of the tail could be distinctly seen.'

In London, this Comet was not observed until Saturday night last, about nine o'clock; and at eleven, in the same evening, its elevation above the horizon, appeared about 10 degrees, and the sun being, at the time, nearly 15 degrees below, its distance from the sun cannot much exceed 25 degrees. The night was remarkably light, and the moon covered by clouds, circumstances extremely favourable to the brilliancy of its appearance; the head vied with Capella (to the east of it) in brilliancy. The length of the tail, which, when the Comet was on the meridian, pointed somewhat to the west of the zenith, extended about 15 degrees; and, unlike the Comet of 1811, it appeared to proceed immediately from the nucleus, which was much denser than that of the former Comet, and there was no separation between it and the coma, but the body became gradually rarer, and in the upper part expanded into the tail; which appearance may arise from a very dense atmosphere surrounding the nucleus, and reaching to the rarer fluid forming the tail, if there be any distinction between the two fluids, as appears to have been the case with the Comet of 1811.

For the subjoined observations, we are indebted to the learned Dr. Burney, of Gosport:—

'In the evening of the 3d of July, 1819, from a quarter past nine till a quarter past twelve, we were gratified with the sight of a Comet, with a lucid train projecting upwards, or from the sun, and nearly in a perpendicular direction. At half-past ten, it was in the N. by W. point, within 10 degrees of the horizon, immediately in the breast of the Lynx, and, by the sextant,  $19\frac{1}{2}$  degrees distant from Capella. At 10 h. 40 min. it was 44 degrees from Polaris, and at half-past eleven, about 40 degrees from Dubhe, in the back of Ursa Major, when it was due north, and had a slow motion downwards of about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  deg. per hour. Viewed through a good achromatic telescope, its body appeared more confused, or had a greater nebulosity, than when seen with the naked eye, perhaps from thick dewy haze then descending. Though the brilliancy of moonlight was not favourable to observations, yet the nucleus of the Comet appeared of a pale white light, and was sometimes brighter than at others, as was also the tail, which expanded upwards at intervals, from 6 deg. to 10 degrees in length by the sextant. From its position and motion, it would appear that it had passed through the head of the Lynx, between Auriga and Ursa Major, and now



advancing towards the head of Gemini. The train had a little inclination westward, and appeared about three degrees in width at its greatest extremity. Its apparent magnitude is nearly similar to the Comet that appeared here in the beginning of September, 1811; but the train is much longer and wider.

This Comet passed the meridian, below the pole, at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, on Saturday, about midnight, when its place was determined as follows:—

Apparent right ascension	-	6 h. 51 m. 36 sec.
North polar distance, corrected for refraction	} 46 deg. 18 m. 47 sec.	
Mean time of observation	-	12 h. 6 m. 56 sec.

The Comet was again observed on Monday night, (July 5,) but not until it had passed the meridian, when the following observation was made:—

Apparent right ascension	-	7 h. 0 m. 9 sec.
North polar distance	-	43 deg. 34 m. 48 sec.
Mean time of observation	-	12 h. 36 m. 4 sec.

On Wednesday and Thursday nights, this beautiful phenomenon was visible for some time, but appeared much diminished in size and brilliancy.

We suspect that this is the same comet that was announced in the Philosophical Magazine for March, last year. It was discovered on the 26th December, 1817, in the constellation of the Swan, by M. Blanpain, at Marseilles, and observed by him to the 18th of January, last year. Its movement was described by M. Blanpain, as very slow, its right ascension increasing only seven minutes in twenty-four hours, and its declination diminishing from thirty-three to thirty-five seconds in twenty-four hours. M. Blanpain's observations embraced but a very small arc; but from them M. Nicollet deduced a parabolic orbit, and by his observations, the Comet would pass its nearest point to the sun early in March last year.

The Paris papers of Sunday last, notice the appearance of the Comet, as it was observed there at the same time as in London; they confirm the account, that it was lately discovered at the observatory of Marseilles.

As it is not doubted but that this Comet is the same whose orbit was calculated by M. Nicollet, last year, his calculations become now more interesting. According to his calculations, it passed its point nearest to the sun on the 3d of March, last year, at fifteen minutes past 11. Its perihelion distance equal to 1,12567, (a little more than  $1\frac{1}{4}$ ;) that of the earth to the sun being taken as unity. Inclination of its orbit to the ecliptic, 88 deg. 38 min.; longitude of the ascending node, 68 deg. 5 min.; longitude of perihelion, calculated by the orbit, 187 deg. 32 min. Its heliocentric movement direct.

### Original Poetry.

#### SUMMER; A SKETCH.

WHEN the lark rises from the poppied fields  
Of undulating corn, and a grey sky  
Receives the sun to give a new-day's birth  
To eyelids and melodious breath; to wreaths  
Of green leaves interlaced with blossoms, fruits,  
And genial dews;—and when the cuckoo seeks  
The sparrow's nest, and idly drives her hence,  
Like Folly, with her tautologic notes:  
When we can see, all round the earth's green tops,  
Clouds shaped like rocks of silver and of gold,

And lakes of ether swimming to the air,  
And shadows creeping up and down the hills,  
Subservient to reflection, then 'tis Summer.  
And the pure spirit, who wanders 'mid the works  
Of beautiful creation, feels a thrill  
Of deep enchantment working, wheresoe'er  
The glance of reason shoots, and taught by love,  
Adores the wisdom of the great Supreme,  
In the delicious symmetries of leaves;  
As the vast boundaries of th' ethereal skies,  
With their inimitable hues and aspects.  
And when, by instinct, insects hasten home  
To escape the vengeance of a storm, and farmers,  
Like heroes in a battle, their peasantry  
Drive to the quick securing of the hay;  
And the white drops of rain smoke 'midst the light  
Of dangerous electricity, and sounds  
Roll round the regions of the upper worlds,  
We hail the bridge of fancy striding heaven,  
In ray-form'd architecture, and adore  
The Architect, exclaiming, hope, faith, truth,  
And seasons are in annual unison,—  
Then, lovely Summer, thou art crown'd abroad:  
Hence our unceasing prayers shew that love  
Which gratitude and duty breathe; the sweet  
Employment overcomes our care; an angel's  
Beatitude is our eternity.

Islington Green.

P.

#### SERENADE. TO JULIA.

LIST, Julia, list! my love arise,  
Sleep's balmy shackles break;  
Here waits thine Edric, who defies  
Each danger—then unclothe those eyes,  
List, Julia, list, awake!  
Not e'en a zephyr's fan is stirr'd,  
Nor leaves alarm make;  
Oh! let thy lover's prayer be heard,  
This moment seize, so long deferr'd,  
List, Julia, list! awake!  
The casement opes—my love appears—  
Quickly thyself betake  
To him, who'll banish all thy fears,  
With sun-beams dry thy flowing tears—  
Now, love, thou art awake!

L.

### Fine Arts.

#### ROYAL ACADEMY:

It closed on Saturday last, and we could not help taking a peep to bid it farewell. Miniature painting is a beautiful art;—we must notice a few of the works of this kind. There are some very clever little things, and we hold it not good manners, to pass the respective artists by with a sniff of the nose, and like the passing wind, heed them not.

819. Miss Stephens; J. Bradley.—This fascinating syren has never, perhaps, had her fine dark eyes and fair features, hit off to more advantage. The attitude is easy and graceful, and the costume is the most becoming which could have been chosen.

820. Portrait of a Lady; W. J. Newton.—We recognize this to be a good portrait of Lady Struth. She has, like the before-mentioned lady, fine dark eyes, which are done to the life. The whole features are faithfully delineated.

881. Stratford Canning, Esq. and Two Ladies; A.

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Robertson.—We pay our first due meed of praise to the lady in *Persian costume*, because, if she be not *The Fair Circassian*, she is a very beautiful lady. Her face is divinely fair, and her eye speaks volumes. There are some delicate touches in the mangement of this miniature. Nor is the other lady at all deficient in personal charms. The gentleman's face is expressive, and well painted. On the whole, we consider these miniatures the production of an artist far above the common level.

896. Frame containing the Portraits of Miss Dorin, Mrs. Foxhall, and Master Smith; Mrs. Green.—This is the work of a lady, and exceedingly pretty. Mrs. Green has the rare talent of giving the spirit of the mind shining through the face, as well as the features, to perfection.

940. J. Keats, Esq.; J. Severn.—A fine expressive countenance, leaning half over a window frame,—in all probability poet Keats. There is a great ray of light made to fall completely over the face in a remarkable manner, which is well done, and gives the features a very animated appearance. We admire this portrait much.

957. Portrait of Earl Stanhope; W. Haines.—Good workmanship is discoverable at first sight in this picture; it is a whole length, and of large dimensions for a miniature. The figure, too, is tolerably cut out, save and except—what?—the legs. From the knee to the foot there is no proportion—they are too short a good deal, looking at the extreme length of the body upwards. The likeness is fine. We beg pardon, but there is a something here we must smile at; we know not whether at the Noble Earl's expense, or that of the artist. We don't wish to allude to the legs of the Noble Earl—No. Nor the head—No—the Stanhope family has always had respectable heads. Nor do we allude to the costume—No—Oh no!—that is highly honourable, for it is the robe of a peer of the realm, lying in the most beautiful folds, and otherwise an article of the highest embellishment to the coronetted individual on whom it so well sits. No, no!—we don't allude to any of these things, but *the coronet!*—Oh! the coronet. Aye! who'd be without a coronet? and who, having one, wouldn't hold it out in his right hand, his noble right hand, in order that every body might have a squint at it, as much as to say, "Look here—I am a Lord—mark that." We beg pardon, we are talking of an error in taste, which perhaps we have no right to do: folks have an undoubted right to have what ornaments about their pictures they like, and so we'll say no more about it. In place of the cap with *five balls* being held out so pompously—we mean nobly—we had much rather seen a thumping bill gracing the nobleman's respectable fist, written upon, "A Bill for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor," or something of that sort. But, however, Lord Stanhope is known to be fonder of his great duties as a peer of the realm, than the baubles of his nobility, and so we will drop the matter. As we before said, there are many beautiful touches in this work. Mr. Haines is deservedly popular as a miniature painter.

### The Drama.

KING'S THEATRE.—In consequence of the commencement of the season at this theatre having been retarded by the alterations of the edifice, the proprietors will open it every Thursday during the present month, in addition to the

usual nights of performance. An old favourite of the town, *Il Fanatico per la Musica*, has been revived very successfully. Ambrogotti gave *Il Fanatico* with infinite humour, and his directions to the orchestra were abundant in musical madness. A short musical drama in one act, called, *L'Inganno Felice*, and styled Rossini's favourite opera, has been produced at this theatre, but it has not been successful. The drama, as a story, is not without interest, and the acting of Ambrogotti, a shrewd rustic miner, with a kind heart and an honest mind, was the best we ever witnessed in this walk of the drama. The music is elaborate, but without meaning; it has diversity without contrast, and copiousness without richness, exhibiting, on the whole, a prodigal waste of science, without a single movement which touches the feelings.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.—This theatre still confines itself principally to the revival of some of its most popular pieces, and thus presenting a continual round of novelty, by the frequent change of the performances: *Frederic the Great; or, the Heart of a Soldier*, with the grand romantic ballet of *Raymond and Agnes*, have been played very successfully; the whole strength of the company, in their respective departments, being engaged in both pieces.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.—Several members of the Royal Family have, during the last and present week, seconded the patronage of the Prince Regent, by visiting this theatre, to witness the performance of some of our best comedies, by the unfortunate Drury-lane company. We are happy to see the Royal Dukes thus stepping forward in support of individuals who have such strong claims on the patronage of the public.

SURREY THEATRE.—'The most haste, the worst speed,' is a proverb known to and used by every one; but the application of it will not bear, in reference to the prolific pen of the indefatigable Dibdin. This modern Lope de Vega, (who will write a burletta before breakfast, and a melo-drama after supper,) in less space than a fortnight from the publication of the third series of the 'Tales of my Landlord,' has presented to the public those new tales, dressed in dramatic habiliments of the highest order: this is really endeavouring to deserve patronage, and the numerous audiences which have attended the representation of these novelties, are the most demonstrative proofs that excellence like this must surely prosper. The pieces were aided by much new scenery, dresses, &c. and our old favourites, Miss Taylor, Miss Copeland, Huntley, Fitzwilliam, &c. in their respective characters, left us nothing to desire. The incidents of both the tales, *Montrose* and *The Bride of Lammermoor*, are faithfully and admirably embodied throughout, and we have no doubt but they will become standing pieces; and if not so popular as the hundred-times represented *Heart of Mid-Lothian*, the fault is rather in the author of the tales than in the dramatist, who has certainly made the most of them.

COBURG THEATRE.—This house was, on Saturday night last, honoured with a visit from its patron, Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg, who was most enthusiastically received. Mr. Henry Kemble has made his appearance here in a splendid piece called *The Inca; or, Peruvian Clemency*; a drama well calculated to exhibit the strength of this theatre in magnificent and costly processions, and well-executed scenery. The first scene of the second act is extremely well managed; it portrays the field of battle, after the contest has ceased, with the dead soldiery, the fallen standards, &c.; the grouping of the whole is excel-



lent, the effect of which is considerably heightened by the pale gleam of the moon falling on the ghastly countenances of the slain, the leader of whom, stretched on a cannon, portrays a visage of horror, which we thought almost created by a reality of suffering.

### Literary and Scientific Intelligence.

*The Stuart Papers*, which were bequeathed by the late Cardinal York, to the Prince Regent, have been deposited in St. James's Palace, where a commission, consisting of Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. Croker, Mr. W. Wynne, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Heber, and Mr. Pollen, are appointed to investigate them. The papers are very voluminous, and it is expected, that some very important information, relative to English history, will be obtained from them.

*Artists*.—It appears, that modern patronage has created, in England, not less than 930 professional artists, of various descriptions, in and near the metropolis only; of whom there are 532 painters, 45 sculptors, 149 architects, 93 engravers in line, 38 in mixed styles, 19 in mezzotinto, 83 in aquatinta, and 22 on wood. It deserves to be especially noticed, that among the painters, there are forty-three ladies.

*Royal Academy*.—The sum of £5000 has been received, this year, at the door of the Royal Academy, for admittance to the Exhibition.

*Velocity of Sound*.—From the experiments, performed lately at San Jago, in Chili, it appears, that sound moves with a velocity of 1227 English feet in a second, the air being at a temperature of 73° 5' Fahrenheit, barometer, 27.14 inches.

*Evolution of Light by the Expansion of Oxygen*.—A very curious and important experiment has recently been made by M. Biot. It consists in breaking, by means of a suitable apparatus, a ball of glass filled with oxygen gas, and placed in the receiver of an air pump, in which as perfect a vacuum as possible has been formed. The effect is to produce in a dark room a brilliant light.

### The Bee.

*Floriferis ut apes in salibus omnia limant,  
Omnia nos itulem depascimur aurea dicta.*

LUCRETIVS.

*King Charles the First*.—The execution of this unfortunate monarch, which has been described with so much eloquence, by our historians, is thus recorded by a newspaper of that period, called 'The Moderate Intelligencer,' without comment, with the same type, and along with the common news of the day:—'On the 30th of January, was Charles, King of England, France, and Ireland, put to death, by beheading, over the banquetting-house, at Whitehall.'

The following literary curiosity is copied, verbatim, from the printed card of a Parisian hotel, and, what adds to its merit, is, that it is the composition of a Frenchman, who teaches the *English* language, at Paris:—'Hotel of Francis furnished, keep a by Madame Deville, this hotel decorated freshly and furnished anew, offered pretty fines apartments, smalls and larges, and in the most moderatted prices.'

*Wine*.—The price of wines in London, in the year 1350, was—Gascoigne wines or Claret, at fourpence per gallon, and Rhenish wines, at sixpence.

*Singular Fact*.—The lovers of natural history may find amusement in the following article:—Mr. Gray, of Tower Street, Chichester, has at this time, in his possession, a hawk and a pigeon, both of which, for some months past, have been together in a small garden. From domiciliary treatment, their natural antipathies are quite obliterated, and the pigeon is completely master of his companion, which he never fails to evince, if at any time the latter encroaches on his demesne.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The favours of Wilford, Y. F., J. R. P., J. P. Th—s, P, L., C. H., and Sam Spritsail, are intended for early insertion.

Beppo is requested to send to our office.

J. B. J. is under consideration.

A Correspondent at Liverpool, calls our attention to the talents of a Mr. Vandenhoff, who has played the character of Brutus, in the tragedy of that name, in a manner which 'equalled any effort ever witnessed on the British stage;' he adds, that 'the spirit and animation of his principal scenes, so judiciously chastened as scarcely ever to overstep the modesty of nature, were particularly admirable.'

The next number of the LITERARY CHRONICLE will contain the first of a series of articles entitled, *Curiosities of Foreign Literature*; by thus extending the field of their exertions, the Proprietors hope they will best show their high sense of the very liberal support with which they have been honoured by a generous and enlightened public.]

Several letters have this week been refused at our office, on account of the postage not having been paid.

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